DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 042 114 AC 008 402

AUTHOR	Wilson, Michael
TITLE	Merit Systems: Hiring the Disadvantaged.
INSTITUTION	Social Development Corp., Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Apr 70
NOTE	19p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Social Development Corp., 1717 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.05
DESCRIPTORS	Agencies, Bibliographies, *Disadvantaged Groups, Employment, *Employment Qualifications, Government (Administrative Body), Human Services, *Job Development, *Personnel Selection, Recruitment, *Subprofessionals, Testing, Training
IDENTIFIERS	*New Careers, Worker Trainee Examination

ABSTRACT

Prepared under authority of the Economic Opportunity Act, this New Careers manual deals largely with specific personnel functions in which manpower project directors and staff members can work closely with government officials--state and local as well as Federal--to alter public service merit system requirements as they affect disadvantaged groups. Such aspects as job redesign, recruitment, training, examinations and written tests, alternative selection methods, and eligibility standards in general, are discussed. Nine references are included. (LY)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED042114

Merit Systems:
Hiring The Disadvantaged

by Michael Wilson

AC008402

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Social Development Corporation

The Social Development Corporation is a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the impact of social legislation through innovations in program administration. The Corporation has demonstrated constructive uses of federal funds particularly in the operations of Department of Labor and Office of Economic Opportunity programs.

This report was prepared by the Social Development Corporation, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20036, under contract with the Manpower Administration, U. S. Department of Labor, under the authority of the Economic Opportunity Act. Organizations undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express their own judgments freely. Therefore, points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent the official position or policy of the Department of Labor.

First Printing April 1970

Contract No. G-8912-99.

ED042114

Merit Systems: Hiring The Disadvantaged

Table of Contents

1 **Introduction**

3 **Job Redesign**
3 USTES Handbook for Job Restructuring
4 Recent Changes in State Merit Systems
6 Role of the Public Service Careers Program

7 **Recruiting**
7 Community Outreach Techniques
8 Better Approaches to Open Competition

8 **Examining**
10 The Worker-Trainee Examination
11 Other Alternatives to Written Tests

12 **Suitability**

14 **Conclusion**

Introduction

"Merit Systems and New Careers," published by Social Development Corporation in 1969 and updated in 1970, dealt with the structure and operations of state and local personnel systems and stressed the importance of understanding the procedures by which people are hired for public service jobs. The purpose of this manual is to discuss several possible ways in which merit system procedures might be adapted so as to facilitate the hiring of the disadvantaged. Our focus will be on those internal rules and regulations which can be changed or modified by the personnel agencies themselves without action by legislative bodies or chief executive officers. Manpower program directors and their staff members should be aware of these possible changes so that they can deal more effectively with merit system administrators and agency personnel officials.

The innovations included here should, by no means, be regarded as the only possible techniques for placing the disadvantaged in public service jobs. Hopefully, they will suggest other methods which may be more appropriate for use with specific merit systems. In any case, we hope to dispel the notion that merit systems are completely inflexible and incapable of meeting the needs of the disadvantaged job seeker.

Depending on the ways in which they are administered, civil service merit systems can be either friends or obstacles to individuals trying to gain access for the poor into the public service. To the extent that they prevent considerations such as race, religion, sex, or political beliefs from deciding who shall receive jobs, the merit systems are valuable allies. Unfortunately, however, irrelevant criteria have become entrenched in most personnel systems, usually placed there in the name of objectivity. These include arbitrary written test requirements, unreasonably high qualifications standards, and suitability regulations which bear no relation to an individual's ability to perform a certain job. At the same time, antiquated job structures still exist which make no provision for trainee or aide slots and require several years of experience for entry level positions.

But merit systems need not be unresponsive to the problems of the hardcore unemployed. Very seldom does the fault lie in the basic civil service law of a state or locality. More often, it is the regulations that have been drawn up to support the law, or the interpretation given those regulations, which are to blame. The regulations and their interpretation can be changed. As former United States Civil

Service Commission Chairman, John W. Macy has said, "a merit *system* is a personnel system built on merit *principles*. The principles are few and fundamental; the system is changeable and must be shaped to the environment of the present, not the past."

The National Civil Service League (NCSL) is currently studying state and local merit systems with regard to their responsiveness to the needs of the disadvantaged. An NCSL survey of professionals in the field of personnel administration, taken for the purpose of updating the League's Model State Civil Service Law, revealed considerable dissatisfaction at the grassroots level with existing procedures. For example, numerous local officials were critical of the traditional "rule of three" under which an appointing officer must limit his final choice to one of the three highest scorers on a written test. It is felt that such a system places too much emphasis on the ability of a written test to determine precisely which applicants are best able to perform well in a certain job. The revised Model Law will suggest permitting local officials to choose from among all competitors who have met the basic eligibility requirements.

A change in the Model Law does not necessarily mean that changes will follow in the actual state and local laws with which the disadvantaged must contend. But it does seem apparent that within the official personnel structure of many state and local governments there are people who are eager to discuss and initiate methods of expanding employment opportunities for the poor. In order to take full advantage of this opportunity to bring about institutional change in public personnel systems, manpower program directors must know two things:

1. Whom to contact about initiating changes, and
2. How to present positive suggestions, based on the needs of their clientele as well as on the legitimate requirements of the local personnel system.

The manual, "Merit Systems and New Careers," discussed the problem of where to initiate action. Briefly, it was suggested that project directors and staff should familiarize themselves with the operations and personnel of the local agency charged with administering the merit system. Preferably, this should be done before there is any specific need for that agency's services The more they know about the workings of the system with which they must deal, the better the chances for success. In addition, merit system administrators are more likely to give full and eager cooperation if a harmonious working relationship has already been cultivated.

Once specific jobs have been identified, however, they may find it profitable to go directly to the personnel officials in the agency where the jobs are located. If the personnel people can be convinced that project staff are able to help them solve their recruitment problems; they will be valuable allies in dealing with merit system administrators. These remarks are, of necessity, very general since individual attitudes, as well as operating procedures and regulations, vary greatly from one community to the next. The point to remember however, is that important personal contacts can and should be made at several levels within the local governmental structure.

The greater portion of this manual will deal with specific personnel functions in which manpower project directors and staff members can work closely with government officials to bring about meaningful changes in the relationships between the disadvantaged and the public service. These areas include job redesign, recruitment, examinations and written tests, and suitability requirements.

Job Redesign

Perhaps the most serious impediment to the placement of the poor in public service jobs is the fact that, under current staffing patterns, there are not enough appropriate entrance level jobs to go around. A demand for the services of the disadvantaged simply does not exist, and so, local personnel officials have no incentive to adapt their examining and recruiting practices in order to attract this group. This is not to say that there is a shortage of work which can be adequately performed by relatively unskilled and inexperienced people. Staffing patterns currently allocate these duties to more highly trained people whose time could be more profitably spent performing higher level work. The New Careers experience has shown that paraprofessional employees can be invaluable in freeing professionals of some of these duties so that they can perform the work for which they were trained. Although the New Careers program has confined itself to jobs in the human services field, the basic concept can be applied to other occupational areas.

USTES Handbook for Job Restructuring

The United States Training and Employment Service of the Labor Department's Manpower Administration has prepared "A Handbook for Job Restructuring"

which should be of use to local manpower project staffs, as well as to state and local government personnel officials. According to the Handbook, it is essential to understand that a job does not exist alone but is related to a number of other jobs in a system. "Job restructuring should not be thought of as changing one job, but rather as rearranging the contents of jobs within a system—the interdependencies and relationships among the jobs in a system cannot be ignored."

Job analysis is said to be the basic technique in job restructuring. The Handbook urges analysts to concern themselves not only with creating entry level positions, but also with designing career lattices which will utilize "the interrelationships among jobs to create promotional opportunities and develop mobility of workers among jobs." A seventeen step methodology for job restructuring is presented and each step is described in detail. Finally, various components necessary to a complete job analysis, such as worker functions, aptitudes, worker traits and physical demands, are covered thoroughly.

Recent Changes in State Merit Systems

Several states, including New Jersey and California, have initiated special programs designed to expand career opportunities for the poor. According to its second phase report, dated May 1968, New Jersey's Public Employment Career Development Program (PECDP) has been responsible for reviewing over 2,000 job specifications and developing 183 new job titles. As a result, over 4,900 state jobs have become available to the disadvantaged. These jobs require minimal formal education, and work experience is required only when it is essential to the performance of the job.

Among the new jobs created by PECDP are:

Clerical Trainee–An umbrella title that can be utilized in agencies at the state, county and local levels. There are no educational or clerical skills requirements. After six months, trainees can be advanced to journeyman status.

Engineering Aide Trainee–This title can be used to provide entrance into professional engineering jobs for the disadvantaged. Previously, entry level positions were restricted to those high school graduates who had been enrolled in college preparatory courses. Now it is possible for those with less than a high school education to enter white-collar engineering areas with the possibility for upward mobility to professional positions.

Welfare Aide–This position allows a high school graduate with two years of

experience to enter a job class previously restricted to college graduates.

The New Jersey State Department of Civil Service prepared a cost analysis report on clerical, engineering aide and human services trainee positions. Before giving its findings, the Department emphasized that:

> "When determining and analyzing costs one should be concerned with more than just cash outlay. The cost of training an individual, rather than being regarded as a current expense, should be viewed as a capital investment, as the effect of the training program will accrue benefits for the trainee, his family and society in general."

The clerical trainee program was found to cost $2,743 per trainee. The Department of Civil Service concluded that "the instructional costs [were] fixed and [would] diminish as they [were] distributed over a large number of clerical trainees." Costs per trainee for the other two programs were somewhat higher and no specific conclusions were drawn. However, the general statement was made that "an analysis of the status of individuals employed in titles created by the Career Development Program from August 1966 to May 1969, reveals a turnover of only 13 percent. Such a figure is at least a partial validation of one of the Program's presumptions: some job requirements can be modified to permit employment of the disadvantaged population without unduly affecting levels [or quality] of performance."

The State of California has been following a similar strategy in its attempts to hire the disadvantaged. When the qualifications standards for an entry level position are prohibitive for the disadvantaged, aide positions are created and filled through provisional appointments. These are special appointments, allowed by most state and local merit systems and designed to fill jobs for which no list of eligible candidates has been established. Completion of a specified manpower training program can be made the qualification requirement for these provisional appointments.

In California, arrangements have been made with the local Work Incentive (WIN) Program staff to use state agencies as hosts for WIN enrollees. Thus, an individual may receive on-the-job training from a state agency for six months under a host arrangement. He would then be given a provisional appointment for a period of from six months to one year. By this time, he should be fully qualified for competitive appointment. In fact, the state agencies have found such people better qualified than the walk-in applicants they had been getting, because they have had

from twelve to eighteen months experience with the agency and are familiar with its operations. The objective with this strategy, however, must always be ultimately to meet some standard for competitive appointment, since most states limit provisional appointments to six months or one year. Innovative variations on this technique can, of course, be made in each community, based on local training resources, merit system requirements, and employment needs.

If job redesign is such as efficient way of utilizing manpower, why has it not been more widely accepted in state and local governments? There are at least two possible answers to this question. One is that perhaps some agencies actually have created aide positions, on paper, but have been unable to come up with the disadvantaged applicants to fill them. This possibility is discussed in the next section of this manual on recruiting. A second answer might be that many merit system administrators and agency personnel officials, because they are often shorthanded and overworked, have tended to view job redesign as a desirable luxury which will have to be considered sometime in the future, if at all. In such cases, it is the job of the manpower project staff to impress upon these officials the fact that restructuring can be a worthwile investment of their time.

Role of the Public Service Careers Program

The Labor Department's new Public Service Careers (PSC) program should prove to be a useful incentive for state and local officials to modernize their personnel systems. The PSC program provides funds to state and local governments interested in placing the disadvantaged in public service jobs. Among the allowable costs under the program, according to the Manpower Administration's General Description, are "salaried staff positions for persons planning and implementing better human resource management through occupational analysis, staff development, improved organization, and management techniques" and "technical assistance in modernizing agency personnel systems including systems analysis of merit system structures designed to aid entry of disadvantaged persons."

Money is also available under the PSC program for training, remedial education, counseling and various supportive services for program enrollees. The local government, as prime sponsor, will deal directly with agencies providing these services. In this way, it is hoped, permanent and mutually beneficial working relationships can be developed between the state and local governments and the human resources agencies. At the same time, the technical assistance and economic

wherewithal for job restructuring provided by the program should be instrumental in bringing about institutional change within the governments.

Recruiting

The disadvantaged will never find meaningful jobs in the public service if they are unaware that such jobs exist or if they are made to believe that the jobs are beyond their reach. Too many government agencies confine their recruiting activities to the "standard outlets," such as the major newspapers and radio stations, colleges and high schools, and the bulletin board outside their own personnel offices. Such practices effectively exclude the poor, who often listen only to "soul" or Spanish language radio stations, who are not in school, and who do not know the location of an agency such as the Civil Service Commission which seems to have no relationship to their lives.

The poor represent an extensive and largely untapped manpower source, especially for the aide positions discussed in the preceding section. The State of Texas has been extremely active in creating entry level jobs which lead to well paying journeymen positions. But in some communities these jobs have gone unfilled because adequate channels of communication have not been established between the employing agency and the minority community. Unless aide jobs are filled, agencies will continue to operate under their traditional staffing patterns and may never realize the considerable benefits to be gained from job redesign.

Community Outreach Techniques

One highly effective way of establishing these channels of communication is for the personnel agency to assign one or more of its employees to multipurpose neighborhood service centers or to Community Action Agency outreach facilities. This should be done on a full-time basis, although it can be a part-time assignment if the level of hiring is low enough to warrant it. The important thing is to have someone from the personnel agency in the center on a regular schedule to explain new examining developments and staffing needs and to answer questions from members of the disadvantaged community. The State of California has adopted this procedure and has found it highly useful.

The Community Action Agency (CAA) is a natural ally of the local government's

personnel division, simply because the CAA has the outreach capability to produce the people needed to fill the government's jobs. Arrangements can be made between the two agencies for a variety of purposes:

1. to publicize specific job vacancies
2. to conduct examinations in the minority community rather than "downtown", and
3. to arrange transportation to testing and job sites

Better Approaches to Open Competition

All state and local civil service laws require free and open competition for their public service jobs. To make certain that open competition actually includes the disadvantaged, personnel officials have numerous techniques at their disposal. Examination publicity can be disseminated through minority news media and neighborhood service centers, as well as in the standard outlets. Zone certification can be justified in some instances, which means that residents of certain neighborhoods are given preference for particular jobs. This is especially true in the human services field, where applicants for aide positions may be considered better qualified if they are familiar with the neighborhood in which the services are dispensed. In some cases, a residence requirement may even be part of the job's qualification standards. For example, the public housing authority may require its maintenance staff to live in the projects themselves so they will be available in case of an emergency. Manpower agency staffs should look closely at public service jobs in their communities to identify instances where selective recruiting from among the poor can be justified.

Examining

At the heart of all merit systems is the requirement that job applicants pass some form of examination in order to demonstrate their qualifications for the job. Many times, especially for higher level jobs, the examination consists only of a review of each applicant's past work experience to determine whether he has the proper background for the job. When it comes to lower level jobs, however, personnel agencies tend to make "examination" synonymous with "written test." There are at least two reasons for this:

First, reviewing and evaluating a job applicant's work experience is a rather time-consuming process. Since, at any given time, there are only a few top level job vacancies and relatively few people applying for them, personnel agencies are able to spend the necessary time on individual applications. On the other hand, the turnover rate in entry level positions is high and there are often several applicants for each vacancy. Consequently, some kind of mass examining technique is required, and the written test has been thought to fill the need.

Second, many applicants for entry level jobs have little work experience on which personnel officers can base their decisions. The officers have responded by first screening out all applicants who lack a high school diploma and then requiring the survivors to take a written test. Testing is felt to be a reasonably objective way of measuring the relative abilities of each applicant. Thus, the written test has been seen as both an efficient way of examining large numbers of people and as the only way of objectively examining people with few skills and little work experience. There is little doubt that written tests are highly efficient for ranking people numerically. If the applicant answers twenty questions correctly, he receives a score of 100; if he answers only nineteen right, his score is 95. But it is highly debatable whether the first applicant is somehow five points more capable than the second of performing the job for which they were both competing. Or, for that matter, whether either is more capable than the poor fellow who only answered five questions correctly and failed the test. Too many written tests in use today are capable of measuring only one thing with complete accuracy–the competitor's ability to take written tests.

When written tests are used, their main usefulness should be to determine whether the applicant has the required minimum knowledge, not to select the highest ranking competitor. For example, a particular job might require an individual to read relatively simple written instructions before carrying out essentially non-verbal tasks. A written test might be deemed necessary to make certain the applicant is capable of reading the instructions. But, the individual who demonstrates this ability should not then lose his chance at the job because a competitor has more highly developed reading skills which are neither required nor particularly useful on the job.

If written tests must be given, they should at least be related to the jobs to be filled. Too often, heavy reliance is placed on aptitude tests as opposed to subject matter tests. Aptitude tests are well suited for college graduates who are experi-

enced in the fine art of taking tests. But they discriminate against the poorly educated when they require broader aptitude than the job demands. When close linkages have been established between manpower training agencies and local personnel offices for recruiting purposes, written tests for entry level jobs should be based on specific subject matter information required by the job and taught in the training classes.

In those situations where local personnel specialists feel that a written aptitude test is essential, manpower development or orientation agencies should include pre-test training in their programs. This should serve to offset at least partially the disadvantage suffered by those who are not used to taking tests. Job developers should study sample questions of the appropriate tests, and perhaps even take the test in a competitive situation in order to be thoroughly familiar with it. Program enrollees could then be drilled in test taking so they will have a reasonable idea of what to expect when they enter the examination room. These tactics would afford no unfair advantage to enrollees; they would merely help compensate for present enrollee disadvantages. Pre-test training, of course, takes valuable time away from more job related instruction, so the greatest emphasis should be placed on convincing personnel officials to drop the written aptitude tests altogether.

As we said earlier in this manual, many personnel people are having grave doubts about the usefulness of written tests for examining the disadvantaged. A variety of alternatives are currently being used.

The Worker-Trainee Examination

The United States Civil Service Commission has developed the Worker-Trainee Examination for entry-level blue-collar positions with the federal government. In some respects, this examination represents an almost complete reversal of traditional examining techniques. While most exams are designed to eliminate the applicant who lacks specified minimal qualifications for a particular job, the Worker-Trainee penalizes the competitor who has significantly more skills or training than the job requires.

The Worker-Trainee Examination requires no written test. Applicants' ratings are based solely on their answers to questions on two specially designed application forms. These questions are intended to measure the competitor's motivation and dependability, as well as indicate the kind of work experience he has had. Applicants who have had little formal education or work experience but who have shown

themselves to be highly motivated (e.g. by actively seeking work through a local employment office or by completing manpower training programs) will do well on the exam. Such individuals might have been rated ineligible on an examination requiring a written test. On the other hand, the potentially over-qualified applicant with a good education and much experience, the type of individual who could qualify for higher level work, will do less well on this particular exam. The adaptation of the Worker-Trainee application form to data processing equipment has allowed the Civil Service Commission staff to review large numbers of applications.

One of the ideas behind the Worker-Trainee exam is that when the basic requirements for a job are willingness to do the work and inability to qualify for better positions, these factors should be considered in the examining process. Unfortunately, many of the positions filled by the Worker-Trainee are essentially dead-end jobs. However, the principle can easily be applied to more meaningful positions, and job redesign might produce an effective career ladder extending above those previously dead-end jobs.

Since the final rating in the Worker-Trainee and similar exams is at least partially dependent on how well the individual has filled out his application form, enrollees should be given special assistance in this area. A carelessly prepared application can cost the enrollee valuable rating points. Job developers should try to determine from personnel officials just what kind of information is being sought. Enrollees can then be helped in preparing their applications accordingly.

Other Alternatives to Written Tests

Another alternative to the written test would be an oral interview. If properly constructed, such an interview could reveal a great deal about an applicant's qualifications for the job, as well as the attitudes he brings to his work. The State of California uses oral interviews for a large number of its entry level jobs. Interviews are time-consuming, of course, and they present a genuine problem when a great many people have to be examined. However, interviewing can be used in conjunction with written tests. For example, applicants could be given two tests–one measuring aptitude and one measuring job-related subject matter knowledge. The competitor who passes either test–even with the minimum score–would be eligible for the oral interview, upon which the final rating would be based. Under this system, the personnel agency would not have prohibitively large numbers of people to interview and yet ratings would be based on a reasonably fair method

of assessment.

In New Jersey, the Civil Service Department developed a largely nonverbal performance-aptitude test for apprentice painter jobs with the Newark Housing Authority. The test required candidates to walk scaffolds thirty feet off the ground, pick shades of colors, and mix paints of different colors to match color swatches. The ability to follow simple spoken directions was also tested. Performance-aptitude tests such as this can be useful for apprentice jobs requiring basically manual skills.

When a job requires the possession of a particular skill, there is no substitute for having that skill. In such cases, most jurisdictions require a performance test, usually given at some central location. However, the U. S. Civil Service Commission, feeling the effects of a severe shortage of typists and stenographers, moved several years ago to decentralize its examining procedures in this area. The Commission will now accept certificates of proficiency from teachers of typing and stenography. These documents, which certify that a particular student has performed at a specified level of proficiency in either typing or stenography, will be accepted in lieu of passing a CSC administered performance test. Instructors in manpower training agencies, as well as teachers in colleges, business schools, and even penal institutions have been authorized to issue the certificates. The applicant still has to take a performance test, of course, but he may do so in the familiar surroundings of the classroom rather than in the alien atmosphere of a crowded CSC testing room. This can have a tremendous effect on a competitor's ability to perform at his best on a test. Proficiency certificates have been accepted for over five years now, and the Civil Service Commission has found no indication that unqualified applicants are gaining eligibility. State and local merit systems should be encouraged to make similar changes in their performance test procedures. Under the new Public Service Careers program, performance test requirements may become less important because the program encourages local governments to hire first and then provide on-the-job training.

Suitability

Ability to perform the work is not the only requirement for entrance into the public sector. Many job seekers have been turned down because, for one reason or

another, they were deemed "unsuitable for public service." Such a ruling can be based on many factors. In the case of the disadvantaged, the reason is usually related to a poor credit record, an arrest record, or a poor employment history. Many state and local governments set unrealistically high suitability standards for their employees. Until three years ago, the federal government required job applicants to list all encounters with the police, regardless of whether a conviction resulted, or even whether charges were pressed against the applicant. The present federal application form is based on the assumption that a man is innocent until proven guilty and asks only for information concerning convictions. However, many state and local governments continue to inquire about all contacts with the police. Applicants with heavy debts and/or spotty employment records are also viewed with suspicion. Even when they are able to attain eligibility, their chances of actually being appointed to a job are prejudiced by their allegedly questionable suitability.

Many social service programs have been developed in recent years to reduce the risks to employers wishing to hire applicants with suitability problems. The United States Training and Employment Service and other agencies administer bonding programs for ex-convicts. If an employer knows that he is protected against possible financial loss due to employee thefts, he will be more inclined to give an ex-convict the chance to prove himself. Community credit unions and courses in money management can help disadvantaged employees avoid serious debt problems. Several manpower training agencies employ job coaches whose responsibilities include counseling enrollees who have recently been placed in jobs. The coaches, who are often intimately familiar with the problems of the disadvantaged, try to assist the new employees in resolving any problems which might adversely affect job performance. These problems might include anything from transportation difficulties to personality conflicts with supervisors or fellow workers.

Manpower agencies should play an advocacy role for the poor in their dealings with government personnel officials. These officials should be made familiar with the kinds of social services described in the preceding paragraph. They should also be aware of the Report of the Advisory Committee on Merit System Standards which stated, "appointment restrictions related to conduct and reputation, such as the use made of employment, academic, credit and arrest records, should be modified or eliminated from jobs where they are of questionable value." In other words, state and local merit system administrators should re-examine their

suitability requirements to make sure their governments are not being needlessly deprived of potentially valuable employees.

Much of the improvement in the area of more reasonable suitability requirements will have to come about as the result of attitudinal changes on the part of government officials. There may be cases, however, where legal action is appropriate. The Neighborhood Legal Services Project of Washington, D. C. for example, has looked into the question of whether city or federal agencies should put pressure on employees to pay their debts when complaints are received from merchants. The lawyers argue that this, in effect, makes the agency a collection service for the merchants, many of whom specialize in preying upon ghetto residents. Legal assistance would also be helpful when racial discrimination appears to be occuring in spite of merit system safeguards. Completely equal opportunity is, unfortunately, no more a reality in the public service than it is anywhere else.

Conclusion

The responsibility of a manpower agency for its clients does not end when the client is placed in a job. Various supportive services may be needed to make sure the client adapts successfully to his new work situation. If possible, meetings should be arranged between manpower agency staff members and operating supervisors to discuss each client's progress on the job and to iron out any difficulties which may arise. The manpower agency staff should make sure the clients are being given adequate supervision as well as challenging work to perform. Too many employers, public and private, have tended to expect less from their disadvantaged trainees, perhaps due to a well intentioned but misguided notion that the poor are not capable of high-quality performance. When less is expected, less is often received and, as a result, promotions are not forthcoming. The main goal of a manpower development program should be to place its clients on the first rung of a career ladder, not to provide employers with a few token disadvantaged who can be set in a corner and promptly ignored. And, if true institutional change has been accomplished, if employers have been convinced to restructure their jobs and to recruit from among the disadvantaged, every time a former client is promoted, a new entry-level job opportunity will be created.

Bibliography

Harrison, Bennett, "Public Service Jobs for Urban Ghetto Residents," *Good Government,* 86:3 (Fall 1969):1–20. Reprints available from the National Civil Service League, 1028 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

Berg, Ivar, "Rich Man's Qualifications for Poor Man's Jobs," *Trans-Action,* March 1969, pp. 45–50.

For All the People, By All the People: A Report on Equal Opportunity In State and Local Government Employment, United States Commission on Civil Rights, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 1969. 277 pp.

Handbook for Job Restructuring, United States Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, 1970. 46 pp.

McClure, Joseph, *Merit Systems and New Careers,* Social Development Corporation, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C., February 1970, 14 pp.

A New Challenge: The Disadvantaged. The Public Employee Relations Library No. 17. Public Personnel Association, Chicago 1969. 43 pp.

Progress in Intergovernmental Personnel Relations. Advisory Committee on Merit System Standards, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1969. 130 pp.

Public Service Careers Program: A General Description, United States Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, August 1969. 69 pp.

Three New Careers in New Jersey Civil Service, A Cost Analysis, New Jersey, State Department of Civil Service, 1969. Trenton, New Jersey, 20 pp.

ERIC Clearinghouse

SEP 12 1970

on Adult Education